



# NEWS RELEASE

United States Department of Agriculture • Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service • Legislative and Public Affairs  
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## **APHIS OFFICIALS RECEIVE PRESTIGIOUS PRESIDENTIAL RANK AWARD**

WASHINGTON, Oct. 31, 2008--The U. S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) today announced that Dr. Jere Dick, associate deputy administrator for the veterinary services (VS) program, Mr. Paul Eggert, associate deputy administrator for the plant protection and quarantine program (PPQ) and Dr. Andrea Morgan, associate deputy administrator for VS' regional operations, received 2008 Presidential Rank Awards. The award recognizes career senior executives who sustain accomplishments over an extended period of time that demonstrate strength, integrity, industry and relentless commitment to public service.

"These three individuals have consistently demonstrated strong leadership and a commitment to carrying out the APHIS' mission. They are very deserving of this honor and recognition for their tremendous efforts and accomplishments," said Cindy Smith, APHIS administrator.

Dr. Dick is recognized as a distinguished executive specifically for implementing innovative changes to the nation's animal health infrastructure. He placed an emphasis on more strategically managed surveillance systems for high-profile diseases, such as bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE). Dr. Dick led a shift in the way USDA approached regulation of BSE both domestically and internationally. His efforts in leading this change required outreach to scientists across the Department, as well as congressional leaders and state and industry stakeholders. He represented the agency in international trade negotiations with Japan, Canada and Mexico and he worked tirelessly to develop and implement regulations and protocols to reestablish economic opportunities for U.S. agricultural products. His work has restored millions of dollars in U.S. cattle and beef trade by reopening foreign markets to more than 40 agricultural commodities.

Mr. Eggert is being recognized as a meritorious executive for his skills in forecasting future needs and adapting to new methods and technologies in leading PPQ's efforts to protect U.S. agriculture from exotic pests and diseases. Recognizing the linkage between international commerce and risk-based decisionmaking, he established risk assessment centers in Colombia and South Africa, which have helped speed PPQ's review of commodity export requests from these regions and enabled the program to focus on other high-priority assessments. He also leads PPQ's new pest advisory group that evaluates and makes recommendations on new pest detections in the United States, ensuring operational decisions in response are supported by risk analysis. Recognizing that the program needed to harness the wide array of information about pests and pathways around the world, he also guided the establishment of the Offshore Pest Information System, a database that can be used to access and analyze emerging pest risks and guide PPQ's policies and regulations in response.

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Dr. Morgan is being recognized as a meritorious executive for encouraging ongoing collaboration and partnership between USDA and its state veterinary counterparts. These partnerships form the foundation of APHIS' rapid and effective disease response. She advocated improvement of cooperative agreements with the states and tribal nations to enhance live bird market surveillance for avian diseases in all 50 states and increase outreach to producers and markets regarding good biosecurity practices to minimize the spread of diseases of concern. Dr. Morgan provided outstanding guidance to VS so that avian influenza funds were distributed strategically to support rapid response to and containment of avian influenza viruses of concern to the U.S. poultry industry. Her management efforts in these areas have helped prevent costly incursions of disease in the poultry industry.

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